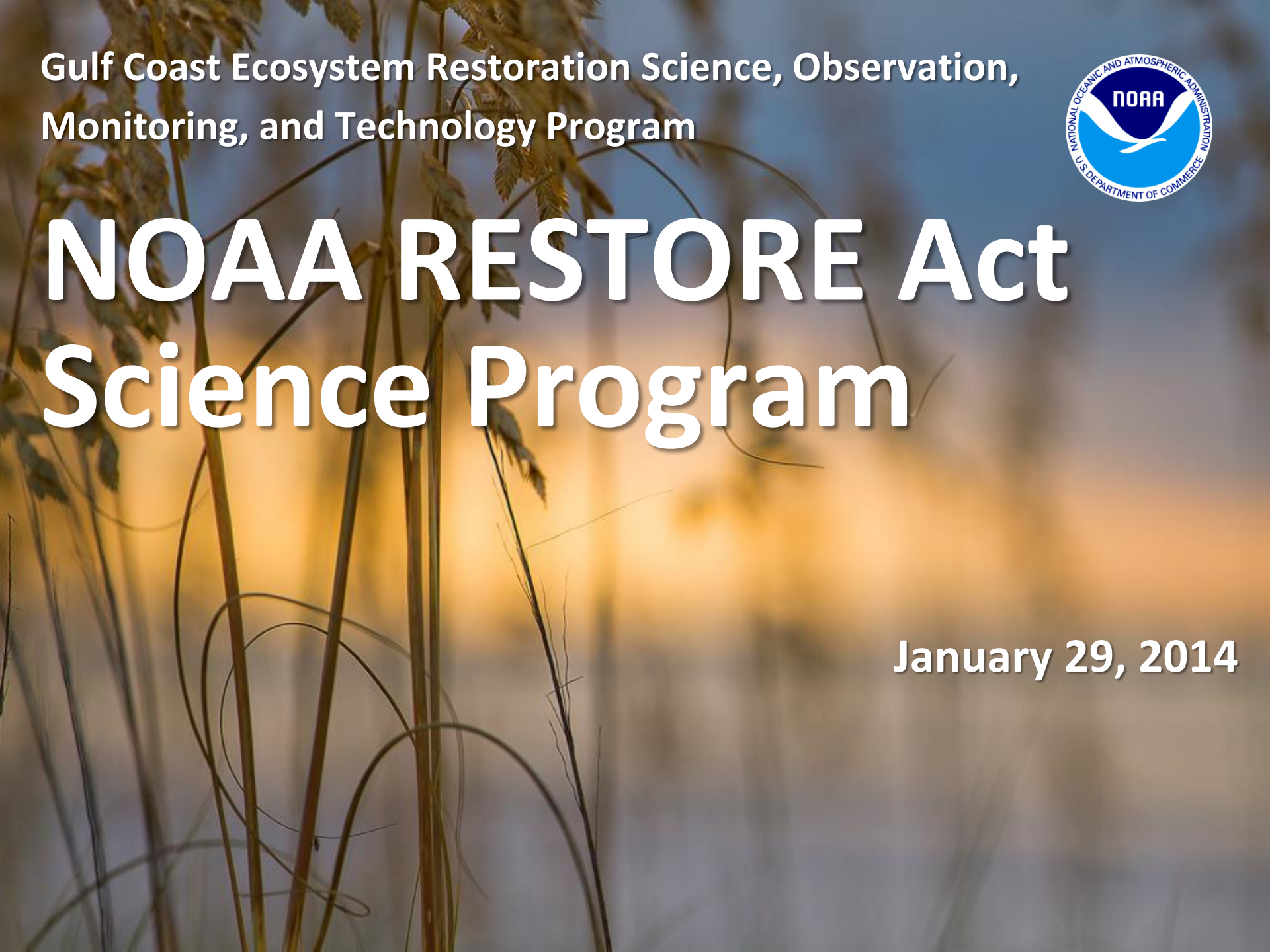


Gulf Coast Ecosystem Restoration Science, Observation, Monitoring, and Technology Program

NOAA RESTORE Act Science Program

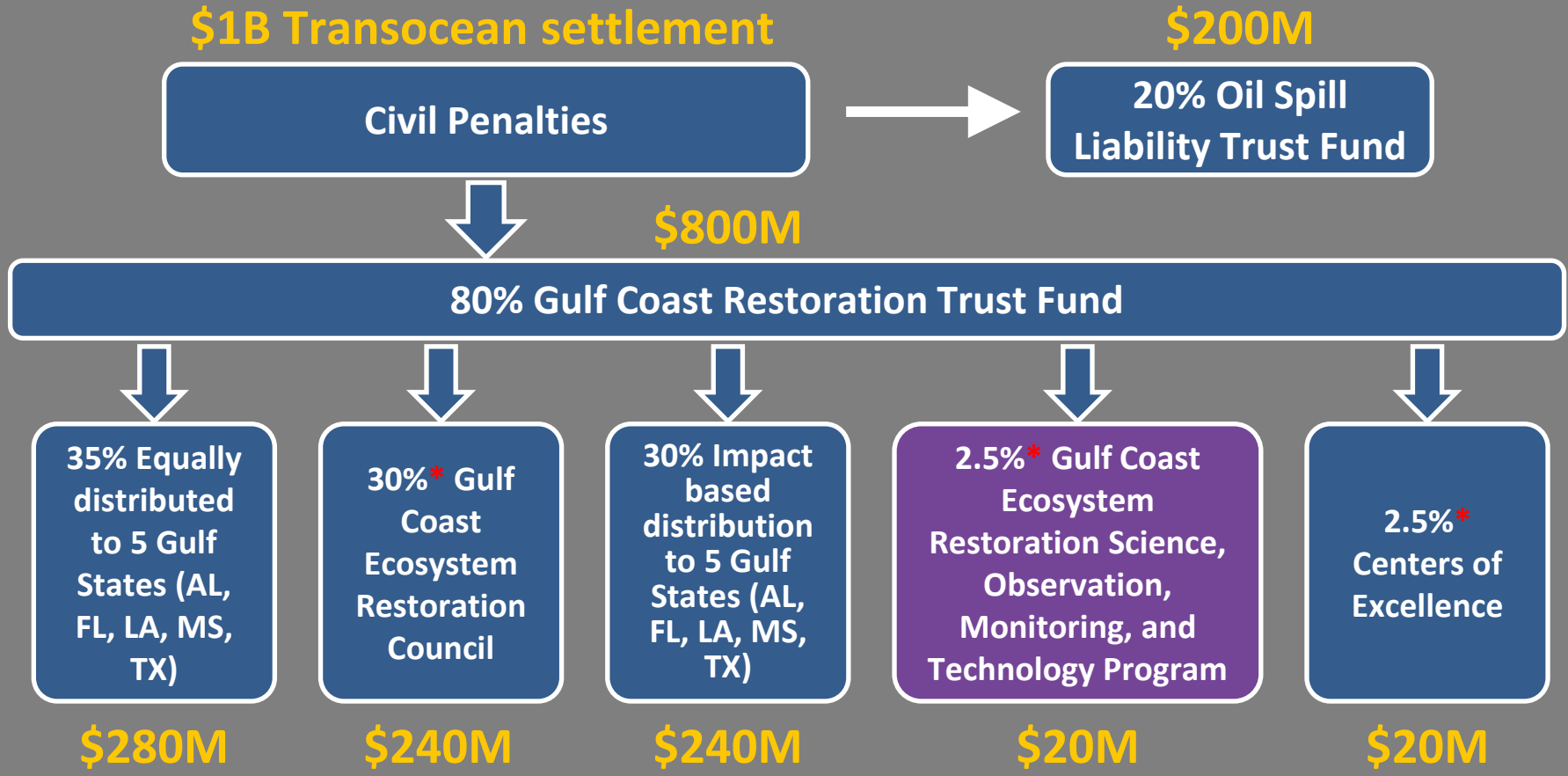
January 29, 2014

What is the Program?

- **RESTORE Act of 2012**
  - **Section 1604 authorizes NOAA to establish a Gulf Coast Ecosystem Restoration Science, Observation, Monitoring, and Technology Program (NOAA RESTORE Act Science Program)**

"…to carry out research, observation, and monitoring to support, to the maximum extent practicable, the long-term sustainability of the ecosystem, fish stocks, fish habitat, and the recreational, commercial, and charter fishing industry in the Gulf of Mexico."

Distribution of Clean Water Act Civil Penalties per the RESTORE Act

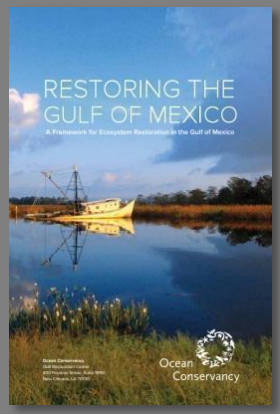


*Supplemented by interest generated by the Gulf Coast Restoration Trust Fund

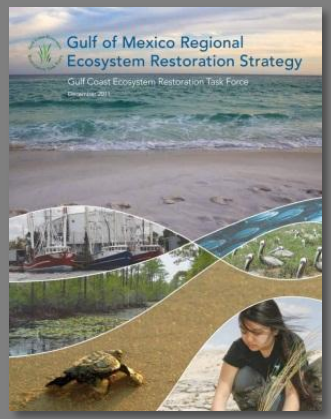
(50% to Gulf Coast Ecosystem Restoration Council, 25% to Science Program, 25% to Centers of Excellence)

Building the Science Program on a Strong Foundation

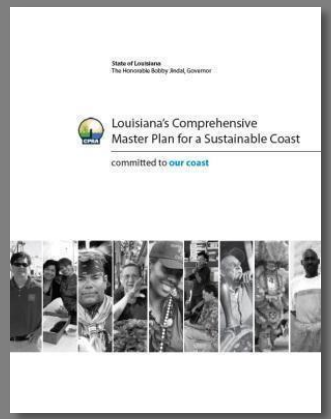
Science Planning, Engagement, and Coordination



The Ocean Conservancy

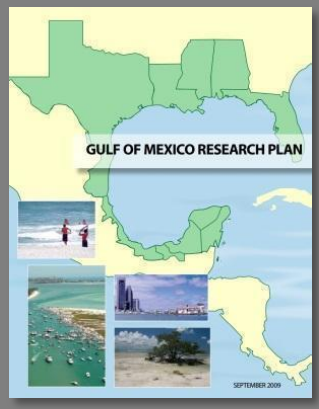


The Gulf Coast Ecosystem Restoration Task Force

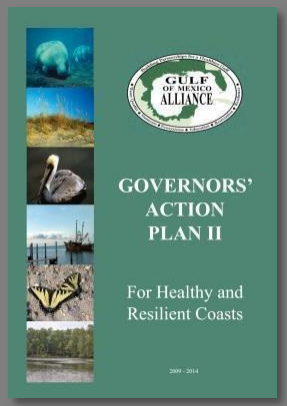


Louisiana Comprehensive Master Plan

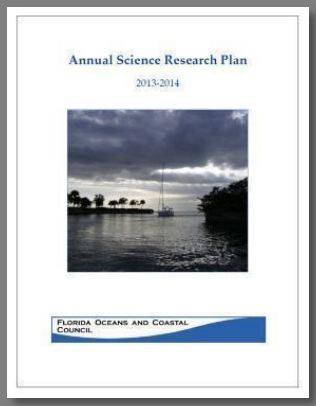
Sea Grant Research Plan



Gulf Governors Action Plan



Florida Ocean Council – Annual Science Research Plan



The direction of the program has and will continue to be informed by stakeholder input, existing plans and activities addressing the Gulf of Mexico ecosystem, and by the science needs of our partners.

Vision and Mission

Vision

Long-term sustainability of the Gulf of Mexico ecosystem and the communities that depend on it.

Mission

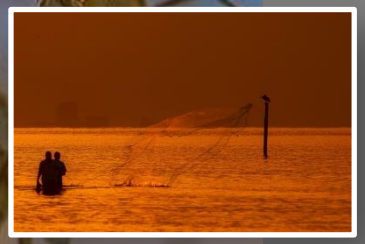
To initiate and sustain an integrative, holistic understanding of the Gulf of Mexico ecosystem and support, to the maximum extent practicable, restoration efforts and the long-term sustainability of the ecosystem, including its fish stocks, fishing industries, habitat, and wildlife through ecosystem research, observation, monitoring, and technology development.

Goals

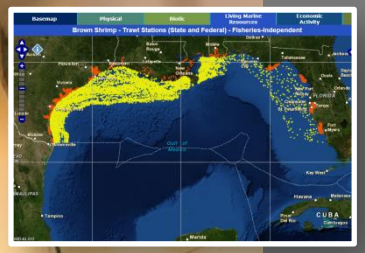
Support the science necessary for better understanding and management of the Gulf of Mexico ecosystem, specifically:

- healthy, diverse, sustainable, and resilient **estuarine, coastal and marine habitats**
- healthy, diverse, sustainable, and resilient **coastal and marine resources, including fisheries**
- resilient and **adaptive coastal communities**.

Focus Areas



"Ecosystem processes, functioning and connectivity" through integrative field and laboratory studies



"Holistic approaches to observing & monitoring" with advanced technologies to monitor fisheries & other natural resources, & data integration tools focused on the observing needs in the Gulf of Mexico

"Integrated analysis and synthesis of existing and new data" to advance the state of ecological knowledge through the search for patterns and principles

"State of Health" of the Gulf, incorporating environmental, socio-economic, & human well-being benefits & elements

Short-term Priorities

- Comprehensive inventory and assessment (i.e., strengths/weaknesses) of ongoing ecosystem modeling efforts (conceptual and quantitative);
- Identification of currently available health/condition indicators of Gulf of Mexico ecosystem components, including humans, followed by comparative analysis of strengths and weaknesses and design/testing of additional indicators;
- Assessment of monitoring and observation needs and development of recommendations to build off existing assets to establish a Gulf wide monitoring and observation network.

Recent Program Actions

2013

Jun	• Website launch • Draft science plan framework released • Engagement session at Gulf of Mexico Alliance meeting
Jul	• NOAA Science Advisory Board (SAB) approves working group for program
Aug	• Federal register notice announcing program released • Virtual engagement sessions
Sep	• Virtual engagement sessions • NOAA SAB requests nominations for working group • Treasury Department releases draft regulations for RESTORE Act
Dec	• Science plan framework released • Began science plan scoping and drafting initial federal funding opportunity (FFO) • Prepare for financial execution and SAB working group

Future Program Actions

2014

Jan	• Science plan scoping and initiate program environmental assessment
Jan – Mar	• Engagement sessions
Mar or Apr	• Science Advisory Board (SAB) working group orientation and discussion
May - Aug	• Release of initial FFO
Jun	• Review of draft science plan by Executive Oversight Board and SAB working group
Jul	• Release of science plan for public comment
Jul – Aug	• Virtual engagement sessions on science plan
Sept	• Release completed science plan

NOAA RESTORE Act Science Program

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